

Join us on the second Thursday of every month for a series of "brown bag" seminars sponsored by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and the U.S. Department of Energy. Each seminar is held at NREL's Washington offices with a video-conference link to Golden, Colorado. Topics focus on new and innovative renewable energy and energy analysis strategies, models, and technologies.



Energy Analysis Seminar Series

A "brown bag" analytical seminar series

Voluntary Policies to Reduce Greenhouse Gases: A Preliminary Review of the Evidence

Eric W. Welch
University of Illinois, Chicago
Thursday, February 14
Noon–1 p.m.

Since the 1980s, voluntary environmental policies have received increasing attention from policy makers and analysts (in the United States, Europe, and Japan) as a means of complementing or replacing command and control regulation. Most recently in the United States, the Bush administration identified voluntary policies as a preferred mechanism for the reduction of greenhouse gases. Research to date indicates that the effectiveness of voluntary policies is dependent on the specific characteristics of the policy and the social, political, regulatory, and cultural context within which it operates. This presentation will highlight some of the important variations in voluntary policies, present a number of theoretical arguments predicting their adoption and effectiveness, and review relevant empirical findings. The discussion will focus on the comparison of voluntary efforts to reduce greenhouse gases in the United States and in other industrialized nations.

Eric Welch is an assistant professor in the Graduate Program in Public Administration at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He earned his Ph.D. in public administration at Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, where his research focused on policy effects on the environmental behavior of firms. Since then, he has concentrated on voluntary environmental policy and the self-regulatory environmental behavior of companies. During the past few years, in cooperation with researchers at the National Institute for Environmental Studies in Japan, Dr. Welch has investigated patterns of business greening in Japan, private-sector adoption of the ISO 14001 environmental management system, and the evolution and effectiveness of the Japanese system of voluntary pollution control agreements. He recently has published articles in journals such as *Public Administration Review*, *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, *Business Strategy and the Environment*, and *Environmental Science and Policy*.



370 L' Enfant Promenade is located adjacent to the Forrestal building at 901 D Street SW in downtown Washington (Aerospace Building). Please contact Wanda Addison at NREL at 202-646-5278 or wanda_addison@nrel.gov

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